



## PRIME MINISTER

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

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P.M.: Ladies and gentlemen I've asked Bill Hayden to join me because of two reasons. I have specifically referred in the speech I made in the House to the role that he has been playing in these matters and he followed me in the House and as also I thought you would like the opportunity of perhaps addressing any questions to him as well. I simply want to say in a brief opening statement to you that what I've had to say today to the people of Australia through the Parliament about the general purposes of the joint facilities has never been said previously by an Australian Government. And the particular purposes which have never been disclosed can be discerned in the following parts of my statement which I would refer to again briefly. That's where I said that a "timely knowledge of developments that have military significance is very important and can be critical for the security of the United States and its allies, including Australia. Effective deterrence and hence avoidance of conflict depend on this. Similarly, effective measures for military restraint and for the control and reduction of armaments depend upon reliable assessments of military developments. Arms limitation arrangements between the United States and the Soviet Union specifically provide for verification. The general purpose of the facilities that we operate at Nurrungar and Pine Gap with the Americans is to contribute to all of these objectives. Among the functions performed are the provision of early warning by receiving from space satellites information about missile launches, and the provision of information about the occurrence of nuclear explosions, which assists in nuclear test ban monitoring and supports nuclear non-proliferation measures. Disclosures of other technical functions of the classified facilities would involve damage to both U.S. and Australian interests and cannot be justified. ... the maintenance of effective deterrence including through early warning has as its purpose the avoidance of war between the nuclear powers. Such a war would inevitably affect all nations, including Australia, and its avoidance is essential for the security of the Australian people." And I would simply repeat here what I've said in the House, that it's very important to distinguish between these purposes which I have discussed and revealed in the House and the technical details of the functioning of the facilities which must necessarily remain classified. I make the point to you that this is the first time that an Australian Government has disclosed these facts. There has been reference to it in certain publications, but the fact that no Government has addressed itself to these issues has led to speculation about a range of other alleged purposes and functions of these bases.

P.M. cont: And we believe that it's appropriate that the Australian people should be informed. The other point I would make is that, as I said in the House, the statement that I have made has been done with the full co-operation and support of the United States administration. Now before you may wish to address any particular questions either to myself or to Bill, Bill you might like to make some observations.

HAYDEN: This is an extremely important statement. It's the first occasion on which officially there has been a declaration of the general functions for which the facilities have been established and in discharging which they operate. I'd like to draw your attention to one simple fact - there is a vast difference between speculation, no matter how well-informed you may presume it to be, and an official statement. No official statement has been made of this nature before. It declares that the facilities contribute to verification, arms control, deterrents, early warning functions. Verification and arms control fulfil obligations which we have morally and under international arrangements, for instance under the SALT arrangements, are concerns under various nuclear weaponry regulatory mechanisms which have been set up through international forums. Deterrence is the only thing we have in place which operates as a break or an inhibitor on the arms race, the possibility of it breaking out into nuclear conflict. We would wish for better. We are working for better. But any alternative that's available at the moment is far worse. In respect of early warning we don't want to see a nuclear Pearl Harbour. We have a moral responsibility in that respect. We freely acknowledge that these facilities in certain circumstances could be nuclear targets - perhaps in certain circumstances some of them very high priority nuclear targets. But the fact is that we have a moral responsibility as well as a practical one to contribute to those functions I mentioned, and particularly deterrents, and the advantage we get from this is that when we talk on these matters, when we propose the calls for arms control and disarmament in particular with our full-time Ambassador for Disarmament, we do so recognised as a country with a direct stake in this matter, not as some country remote in the possible action should nuclear conflict take place.

JOURNALIST: But what have you really told us today that's new?

HAWKE: Well I thought I'd addressed myself to that and so had Bill. And that is that it's the first time an Australian Government has definitively stated what are the functions and the roles of these bases. I've pointed out that there has been speculation, statements if you like, in certain publications. But none of these publications have the authority of a statement by the Government. And it is the fact, as you'd be aware, that because there has been no definitive statement by the Government in the past, then there has been a range of speculation in the Australian community about the functions and suggestions that other functions are involved of an aggressive nature. And it is our belief

P.M. cont.: that it was appropriate that the grounds for that speculation should be removed. And we point out that it is an indictment we believe of previous administrations, conservative administrations, that they hadn't undertaken the task of discussions with our United States ally to enable this to be done. And I pay tribute to the United States administration that in the process of negotiation, which wasn't easy, it took time, that they understood the very sound reason that exists for avoiding ill-based speculation which cannot do anything to help public understanding of the importance, indeed we would put the necessity, of Australia hosting these joint facilities. There is after all a difference between speculation in a newspaper - whatever authority the editors of that newspaper might wish to attach to their statements - there is a difference between what they may like to allege and state and an official statement by the Government. There's one other point if I could just make which I meant to make in my opening statement, and that is that it ought to be remembered that it was the Labor Party when it was last in office between '72 and '75 that made these facilities effectively joint facilities by insisting on Australian personnel participating in the operation of those facilities.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke would you acknowledge that North West Cape which you haven't mentioned now, although you did in the House, is more an aggressive facility than a defensive facility?

P.M.: No I wouldn't put it in that way. I think there are two points that need to be made. It is a key element in the complex communications system which involves communications with ships and submarines of the United States Navy and of the Royal Australian Navy. And I think it's a fact that is acknowledged by all experts that the SLBM, the submarine launch ballistic missile, carried by the submarines connected is not a first strike weapon in its nature. And we also believe that out of the negotiations that we've undertaken with the United States that we have now created a situation through the special access that we have with the United States Department of Defence and the enhanced status of the head of the Australian Defence staff in Washington, that we are able to be in a position to know what the possible relevance which could involve North West Cape in support of any United States military operations. And we're satisfied - my Ministers who have negotiated this and through them, myself and the Government, that appropriate and necessary protection of Australian sovereignty in these matters has been enhanced.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister I was wondering if I could address a question both to yourself and to the Foreign Minister. Mr Peacock has said that today's statement is a sanctimonious platitude with an absence of substance with a view to the July National Conference.

P.M.: Well I would have to concede that if one was looking for an authority on the expression of sanctimonious platitudes one couldn't go better than to the Leader of the Opposition.

P.M. cont: But of course, as with virtually everything he says in the Parliament these days that is a grotesque misrepresentation of the situation. We acknowledge, of course, I mean you would be foolish to try and deny that there is within our Party concern about this issue. And in that sense the Australian Labor Party reflects the total Australian community. And it's healthy that there should be this questioning about our position. Now we believe that we have the responsibility as a Government, and in a sense myself and Bill have a very particular responsibility in these areas, to try and create an information basis for our Party, and for the Australian community. So that people are able to come to conclusions on the basis of facts rather emotion and speculation.

HAYDEN: Well I endorse entirely what Bob's said and suggest (what Peacock has said) is a lot of nonsense, as the evidence will show since we've been in Government we've been speaking in this area fairly regularly. In particular this statement has been in the pipeline for some months since we were in the United States last year and came out in its final refined form a couple of weeks ago. So it is part of an important obligation we had to discharge to the Labor Party. The requirement of the policy is the general functions of the facilities be disclosed - that's been done. But above and beyond that I believe that the Labor Government, the Hawke Labor Government, has been instrumental in mobilising informed concern in the community on the issue of arms control and disarmament. And it's our intention to maintain a flow of information to the community because we want to continue to give leadership to the arms control disarmament movement in this country. We want them to recognise that this Government is particularly active in this field, is dedicated, and has already in the short time we've been in Government shown some concrete progress in these areas at the international forums. I don't think Mr Peacock's statements can be taken seriously. He's suggested that exclusively we were concerned about the forthcoming Conference. Of course we wish to speak to people who are going to be involved in that Conference. But does anyone suggest that the fairly wide range of people from both the social and the natural sciences, the academics from various other fields, the writers, the intellectuals in this community and people from very a broad range of average occupations in this community expressing concern about this issue don't deserve to be communicated with, don't have a justifiable concern. Our job is to explain what we're about, what deterrence is and why it's necessary for us to fulfil that role if we're going to genuinely try to be influential in the issue of arms control and disarmament internationally.

JOURNALIST: You referred in your speech and Mr Hayden has also referred to it - the presence of the bases here do make an added risk to nuclear attack. Do you believe there is widespread community acceptance of that reality?

P.M.: There are at least two things I'd like to say on that. Both I and Bill consistently since we've been in Government, and indeed Bill in discharging his responsibilities as Leader of the Opposition before we came to Government, did not attempt, has never attempted to hide that there is a balance of judgement which we have to make in these things. It would be futile, dishonest, not to acknowledge the risk that is involved in us hosting these joint facilities. But the judgement that we make, and we have no doubt whatsoever about the correctness of that judgement, is that on balance this is something significantly to the advantage of the people not only of this country but the rest of the world. Because as I have disclosed in this statement these facilities play a vital role in the question of stable deterrents, particularly through the early warning functions that I've referred to. And that of course is leaving aside the role that they play in helping to make effective agreements between the superpowers in respect of nuclear testing and so on. But essentially in regard to the question of nuclear war we believe that the existence of these joint facilities and the discharge of their functions make more likely the continuation of a non-nuclear war situation. And therefore the interests of the people of Australia and of the rest of the world, we believe, demand continuation of these functions. The second point I would make is that on the evidence that's available from polling in this matter, it is clear that majority of the Australian people support the position of the Australian Government.

JOURNALIST: Should the Australian people, Prime Minister, be disturbed about those operations which you described as classified?

P.M.: What we have done is to make a clear statement of what the functions are. And let me make it clear that that is an exhaustive statement of functions. There are no other functions or roles than those which I have outlined. But necessarily, of course, we can't go to technical details. It would be manifestly against the interests of both ourselves and of the United States to do that. But I repeat the statement of functions that I've made to the Parliament is an exhaustive statement of the functions.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke the issue of technical functions of the bases. You said you can't say anything further because of the damage to both the U.S. and Australia. Isn't it true that a lot of technical information is made available to the American Congress by the American administration about technical functions and why was it not possible for you to reveal some of that information in your statement.

P.M.: What happens in the United States, according to their processes, is a matter for the United States and as far as we are concerned these are joint facilities, and for us to be able to make a statement of assistance to understanding by the Australian people requires by definition agreement with the United States. The processes of securing this mutual position has been a lengthy one which has involved Bill and Gordon Scholes and then finally, myself. And this is the position of agreement that we've been able to reach. And we believe that it's been useful and will continue to be useful for the people to have that information. It is not possible to say more than that. Let me emphasise the important

P.M. cont.: in understanding which I think is the statement that I made that there has been an exhaustive statement of functions.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, does the US Government seek the Australian Government's permission before making these statements about it, given that you had to get the US Government's permission to make this statement?

PM: The United States Government doesn't talk to us about what happens in the United States Congress.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, will the newly established Parliamentary sub-committee on disarmament and arms control have access to this technical information?

PM: No, I would not believe it would.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hayden?

HAYDEN: I think the important thing is that this is a joint Australian United States statement and it came out of consultation between both of us and it represents as much as can be disclosed without going beyond that which has been disclosed in the United States including the Congress. I am aware of some of the technical data which has been disclosed in the Congress which is available in the annual defence report presented by the Secretary of State for Defence, but nowhere there can I recall seeing any specification about Nurrungar or Pine Gap and I think that is important to recall. There are general statements and conclusions are sometimes drawn from them rightly or wrongly, wisely or unwisely. That is a vastly different matter. Specific terms on which we have been dealing - we have jointly recognised - that is Australia and America - we go beyond what has been provided here about the general function of the base would be to go beyond what is provided generally in the United States.

JOURNALIST: Won't the very suspicions remain - the very suspicions you are trying to overcome?

PM: I don't believe so. There may be by some people who have got a particular barrow or prejudice to push and we are not in the business of trying to stop the pushing of prejudices or ideologies, but all I can say as Prime Minister is supported fully by the Foreign Minister and the Government is that we have made, I repeat, an exhaustive statement of the functions of those joint facilities and that statement, we are confident, will lead the great majority of the Australian people to make the judgement that this Government makes, and that is that obviously on balance the hosting of those joint facilities is in the interests of the Australian people.

HAYDEN: The statement is designed to satisfy as many peoples' concerns as we can possibly do and responsibly do. I am satisfied that it will satisfy in turn a vast majority of Australians. We can't satisfy everyone. Some people wouldn't be satisfied until we remove the facilities from this country. We have made it clear that that is an area of disagreement that we have with those people. We have a moral, practical obligation to support those facilities.

JOURNALIST: It satisfies your doubts that you expressed three years ago?

PM: I have gone through some moral concern about these matters and great heartburning over the past couple of years and more particularly since I have been Foreign Minister. I have come to the conclusion that this is the most practical and responsible position that we can take to continue to host those facilities. I believe that deterrents are the only effective things in place. It is not pleasant, but the alternatives are far worse. It allows us to work credibly and influentially towards the things that we want to work towards achieving.

JOURNALIST: ... was only 7½ lines that has taken 10 months to produce, what was the reason for the delay there?

PM: Well, the matter was, as you imply in your statement, first raised with the United States administration some considerable period ago, and I came into those negotiations fairly late in the piece at the very high levels of the United States administration. And the reason for the delay was the concern of the United States that they were not only talking about a situation and relationship with Australia. They have relations with other countries and they were concerned to be sure that the form of the statement made in respect of Australia was not something that created difficulties for them in other areas and we understood their concern. And let me say they understood our reasons for wanting to let the Australian people know and the discussions being of that nature were fairly long. There were important considerations that had to be taken into account. We at all times, I believe, were faced with a basically co-operative attitude from the United States, but understandably they wanted to make sure that their interests, not only here, but elsewhere were fully taken into account.

JOURNALIST: Were the differences between the Pentagon - upper echelons of the Pentagon and the US State Department ...

PM: I'm not going to go into the question of the internal operations of the United States administration. Your saying it really relates to the statement, are you.

JOURNALIST: It's not unrelated.

PM: The great double negative.

JOURNALIST: It's on French nuclear testing. As I understand, Mr. Hayden, you asked the Office of National Assessments to undertake geological surveys ... (tape ends) Firstly, have you got any results on that and secondly, there is a notion kicking around in similar circles that the French really ought to undertake any underground testing that they have to in Nevada. Would you put that as a credible alternative?

HAYDEN: I read in one of the newspapers that I had asked the Office of National Assessment to carry out this sort of assessment and I'm not sure how that got wrong because I understood another might have lodged that request, but I spoke to him and he said he hadn't, but he thought I had. All I can say is I haven't. And it gets rather complex and curiouser and curiouser but it is probably not a bad idea and I might give the idea in the very near future. For the French to conduct their tests in Nevada - I didn't have to raise that with the French - they spontaneously declared they would never be like Britain beholden to the Americans having their tests carried out in Nevada. It is one of the areas of arguments that we have had that the tests should take place somewhere else like metropolitan France.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, you said you have given an exhaustive list of the functions of the bases. One of the senior officials of the Defence Department, Mr. Rod Thomas, told a Parliamentary Committee about two weeks ago that submarines using North West Cape had counter force capabilities which he acknowledged some analyses said was a first strike capability. Do you disagree with those statements of the Defence Department?

PM: I have quite clearly made my statement in the Parliament and here on that issue.

HAYDEN: Can I answer that. Look, I saw that statement. I disagree with it entirely. One must recognise that modifications and improvements in nuclear weaponry may well establish a counter force capability on the part of Americans with the new Trident submarine missile, for instance. I would be rather dishonest if I didn't acknowledge that. I declared that much as far back as about 4-5 years ago as Leader of the Opposition, but that is something in the future and that is something we have got attend to. And we attend to that sort of matter with credibility because of our position, our direct stake in these matters as I mentioned earlier. I think the area of far greater concern was the potential for the whole framework of stable deterrents to come very much unstuck as a result. Competition that is about to break out in outer space is not just a matter of putting weapons together, but new technology, laser beams, particle beams which can be transmitted from earth to a reflector, amplifier stations in satellites in outer space and then directed back to earth in a way that fulfills the role of anti-ballistic missiles - extraordinarily



de-stabilising. That is why we are particularly active in this area which, I think, probably even comes ahead of concern about the D-5 or Trident missiles because if you nip that in the bud, we have nipped in the bud something that presents awesome worries for us in the near future.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, would your Government contemplate the establishment of any other United States facilities on Australia soil of a similar kind?

PM: Well, that issue is not before us. Let me say this. I think in my statement today I have made quite clear on behalf of the Government why we host those facilities because of the functions that those facilities - what objectives, I think, are satisfied by the discharge of those facilities. Now, one has to be entirely speculative. If it were put to us that given the development of capacities in the technological sense that may require another facility, which facility could serve the same objectives then that is something we would have to take into account.

JOURNALIST: And you are totally satisfied that you know all of the functions of the bases at present in Australia?

PM: Yes, and I repeat that within the policy under which we have operated and the concepts that we have, what I have just said to you would be entirely consistent with that. But we would not change the conceptual framework that we have got. In other words we would not be hosting aggressive facilities, but only facilities which would serve the basic purposes which we believe are in the interests of the Australian people.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, does all this information flow through the Australian Government or does it any of it go only to the Americans?

PM: In respect of the matters that I have talked about, then we are in a position where we have access to all the information which is relevant to those objectives.

HAYDEN: We have small managers. We have co-managers. We have people working on the floor on all shifts at those facilities at Nurrungar and Pine Gap. I can't tell you any more than that. You recall Lionel Bowen and I went to those facilities, I think in 1979 - had quite an extensive assessment of them and I came away satisfied that we were aware of what was taking place and had full access.

PM: I haven't seen inside them.

JOURNALIST: Do you also disagree with the Defence Department view put to Cabinet a couple of months that an American could use North West Cape base without necessarily asking for specific Australian agreement?

PM: We believe that given the new arrangements that have been negotiated under this Government that Australian sovereignty is fully protected in regard to any possible use of that facility in United States military operations.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, was there anything that the Australian Government wanted to include in this statement that the US Government ruled out?

PM: There was a process of negotiation. I think it is accurate to say that there was some slight difference from first drafts, but that always happens in any negotiations, whether it is at a level between governments or at other levels. All I can say is this - that at the end result, we are satisfied with the statement and so is the United States Government.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, are you satisfied that some Australian service personnel are denied access to some sections of the bases?

PM: Well, all I can say is that I haven't had the opportunity that Bill has had and Lionel to visit them. I have listened to their reports on this matter and I have certainly had reports made to me since I have been Prime Minister and I am satisfied as I put that the sovereign interests of Australia are protected in the way the bases operate.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, you say that Pine Gap and Nurrungar are not military bases, isn't that a fairly narrow interpretation?

PM: Well, it is a question for you to say whether it is narrow or not. I explicitly spelled out in my statement to the Parliament what I meant and I think that is quite clear.

JOURNALIST: Previous Prime Ministers and Government spokesmen have referred to them as not being part of weapons systems. Would you exclude that possibility as far as ...

PM: I have made it clear that they are not properly so described. I said that in the statement.

JOURNALIST: Can we assume from what you said today that when the North West Cape agreement comes up for renewal, it will be renewed?

PM: Well, we have gone through the process of negotiation since we have been in Government we have - and my I remind you that when Labor was in before the negotiation between Mr. Barnard and I think it was Mr Schlesinger wasn't it - as a result of those re-negotiations Australian sovereignty was better protected and since we have been in office again - this Labor Government - we have had further discussions and we believe have enhanced the

facility of our people in Washington to be better involved. We are satisfied with results of those negotiations. I have no reason to believe that the issue arises for further re-negotiation that we would not renew the facility.

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